G. R. S. IX-5]

Previous references.

File No. 206-18

1918.
P. P

Serial Nos. 1-2

Later references.

GENERAL AND REVENUE SECRETARIAT.

Serial Nos. Two

Part B for May 19.

SUBJECT.

Agitation in British India on the passing of the Rowlatt Act

Hon

Rep) The T. & R. No 3576 dy 5.5.19.
For such action as may be deemed advisable a copy of a Resolution No 5499 H.H. 19 of the Govt of India re the agitation in British India on the passing of the Rowlatt Act.

Rep) Do The Compiler Gazette of India No 25653 dy 10.5.19.
Republished for genl. information the resolution re Rowlatt in all

W. P. 1950—G.P.R.—20-000—9-18—10

One copy

1919

GENERAL AND REVENUE SECRETARIAT.

P.P

NOTES.

File No. 206-19

FILE HEADING.

Agitation in British India on the passing of the Rowlatt Act

From

The First Asst Resident

No. 3576 Dated 5-5-19 Received 6-5-19

Diary No. 9735 Enclos. 4 Spare Copies. — Serial No. 1

BRIEF ABSTRACT OF LETTER.

Forwarding for such action as may be deemed advisable a copy of a Resolution No 549 dt 14-4-19 of the Govt of India regarding the agitation in British India on the passing of the Rowlatt Act

NOTES AND ORDERS.

Subd with a draft Notification for approval or other orders

Y VS
5/5

GMM
8.5.19

Chief Secy

May be published in the Gazette Extry.

Dewan Secy

Secretary

GMM

May be republished in Mysore Gazette

H/5 GMM

'S OFFICE.
MAY 9 1919
NOTES—First Sheet.
7059

R. S. III-2.

General and Revenue Secretariat.

94 File No. 406 of 1918

Serial No.

Subd for orders as to whether the draft in the file may be issued.

J. VS
12/5

VS
GWA
13.5

Go
the Compn.
NOG 2563 of 13.5
Republishes for general information the resolution referred to in Sl 61.

DIARY NO. 19738

MYSORE RESIDENT'S OFFICE,

Bangalore, 5th May 1919

No. 3576/Misc. 4

CHIEF SECRETARIAT
POLITICAL BRANCH
6 MAY 1919

6 MAY 1919

A copy of the marginally* ~~noted letter, with enclosure,~~ paper, with 3 spare copies, is forwarded with compliments to the Chief Secretary to the Govt. of Mysore, for information, and favour of such action, if any, as may be deemed advisable

Resolution *No. 549, dated 14th April 1919 from the Govt. of India, Home Dept.

First Assistant Resident.

GOVERN NDIA.

HOME I MENT.

No. 549, dated Simla, the 14th April 1919.

RESOLUTION—By the Government of India, Home Department.

The present situation arising out of the agitation against the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act (commonly called the Rowlatt Act), renders it imperative on the Governor General in Council to define the attitude of Government on the subject of that agitation, and the serious disorders which have resulted therefrom, and to indicate the nature of the concerted action which it is now necessary to take for the preservation of law and order.

When the Bill was under discussion, its opponents publicly stated that if it passed into law, a campaign of agitation against it, on a scale hitherto unattempted, would be organized throughout India, and a section of them indicated that they would support that campaign by resort to what is known as "passive resistance." No one cognizant of the conditions of India could have been ignorant at the time of the dangers of initiating a widespread movement of this nature; they were clearly pointed out by many public men of moderate views; and the representatives of Government did not fail, during the debates on the Bill, to emphasize the serious consequences to the public peace which would follow from an agitation such as was then threatened.

These warnings were unheeded, and to the agitation which has succeeded the passing of the Act, must be directly attributed the open breaches of the public peace, the defiance of authority, and the criminal attacks on life and property which have lately been witnessed in certain parts of India. The agitation has followed a double line of action, namely, direct criticism of the Act by means of public speeches and publications, and the initiation of the threatened movement of "passive resistance." The latter movement was ushered in by a demonstration consisting of the observance of a day of fasting, and the closing of shops and places of business. Such a demonstration was not in itself illegal; but there is ample evidence to prove that in more than one place those locally responsible for its organization overstepped the limits of lawful persuasion, and resorted to direct interference with the business of many who were not interested in the movement, and to forcible obstruction of the traffic in the public streets. But the indirect consequences of this aspect of the agitation have been far more mischievous, in that it promoted a sense of unrest and of excitement which was bound to react, and has reacted, on the more ignorant and inflammable sections of the population. The campaign of criticism has involved in many quarters the use of most flagrant misrepresentations regarding the character of the Act. It is clear that large numbers of ignorant people have been deliberately led to believe that the new law gives the police unfettered authority to interfere with public meetings not only of a political, but of a religious and social nature, and to arrest summarily persons engaged in political work, and that it empowers the executive authorities to imprison without trial any person criticising the action of Government.

The Governor General in Council thinks it necessary to reiterate here the following salient facts concerning this Act. It is specifically directed against revolutionary and anarchical crime, and can only be brought into force in any locality when it has been proved to the satisfaction of the Governor General in Council that such crime, or movements tending to such crime exist. It has not so far been brought into operation in any part of India. Its first part merely provides for the speedy trial of certain grave offences; in the second and third parts provision is made for preventive action (similar to, but much more restricted in scope than that now provided by the Rules under the Defence of India Act) against persons suspected of revolutionary or anarchical crime. Action cannot, however, be taken against any individual without the previous order of the local Government. There is nothing therefore which can justify the widespread rumours, for which the promoters of the agitation must be held responsible, that unusual, or even extended powers have been given to the police; nor is there anything which need cause fear or apprehension to any person other than the revolutionary or the anarchist. Not only do the terms of the Act definitely exclude

its use in any case not falling within the definition of anarchical or revolutionary conspiracy; but Government has given the most categorical pledge (which the Governor General in Council takes this opportunity to reiterate) that the tenor and intention of the Act will be scrupulously safeguarded should occasion arise to put it into operation.

The Governor General in Council considers it unnecessary to detail here the deplorable occurrences resulting from the agitation against this Act. The offences which have occurred at Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Lahore have one common feature, the unprovoked attempt of violent and unruly mobs to hamper or obstruct those charged with the duty of maintaining order in public places. At Amritsar and Ahmedabad they have taken a far graver form, a murderous attack on defenceless individuals, and a wholesale and wanton destruction of private and public property. The Governor General in Council thinks it right to state that at Amritsar the loss of life might have been greater but for the protection afforded by unofficial Indians to those who were threatened by the mob, and he takes this opportunity of expressing the gratitude of Government for this conspicuous example of loyalty and humane feeling.

It remains for the Governor General in Council to assert in the clearest manner the intention of Government to prevent by all means, however drastic, any recurrence of these excesses. He will not hesitate to employ the ample military resources at his disposal to suppress organized outrage, rioting or concerted opposition to the maintenance of law and order; and has already sanctioned the application of the State Offences Regulation, 1804, in a modified form, to certain districts of the Punjab. He will further use all preventive measures provided by the Statutes to check disorder at its source, and in Regulation III of 1818, and the corresponding regulations applicable to Bombay and Madras, and in the rules under the Defence of India Act, he has powers which will enable him to deal effectively with those who promote disorder. He has sanctioned the extension of the provisions of the Seditious Meetings Act to the districts of Lahore and Amritsar in the Punjab, and will authorize a similar extension to other areas in which local Governments see reason to require it. The Police Act of 1861 enables a local Government to quarter additional police on any locality which is guilty of organized offences against the public peace, at the charge of the inhabitants, and to levy from the latter compensation for those who have suffered from injury to their property. The Governor General in Council will advise local Governments to make a free use of these provisions where necessary.

The Governor General in Council feels that many of those who inaugurated this agitation must regret the lamentable consequences which have ensued, the loss of life and property, and the damage to the reputation of India. He now appeals to all loyal subjects of the Crown, and to all those who have an interest in the maintenance of law and the protection of property, both to dissociate themselves publicly from the movement, and to exert themselves in quieting unrest and preventing disorder. To all those who render such assistance to the cause of the public and the State, and to those servants of Government who are charged with the onerous responsibility of suppressing excesses against public peace and tranquillity, the Governor General in Council extends the fullest assurance of countenance and support.

ORDER—Ordered that the Resolution be published in the Gazette of India and communicated to all Local Governments and Administrations and all Departments of the Government of India.

Published in page 501 Part I Mysore Gazette dt 15.5.19

SUBJECT

Diary No. of letter replied to....

Section. PP

File No. 20 & 19

Serial No. 02

No. G2565

GENERAL AND REVENUE SECRETARIAT

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, the 191

Date of issue 13.5.19

Signed by TRV GMH

NOTIFICATION

~~In continuation of Governmen~~

~~No. dated,~~

The following ~~Notification~~ Resolution No. 549

dated 14-4-19 issued by the Government of India ~~in the~~ Home Department ~~of Commerce and Industry;~~ regarding the agitation in British India on the passing of the Rowlatt Act

is hereby republished for general information:-

(Here enter the ~~Notification~~ Resolution referred to)

By Order,

GMH

Chief Secretary to Government.

VS

To-The Compiler, Mysore Gazette,
for publication.

GRSM.683

VS 19/5